

DRAFT

**Dresden Finance Committee
Hanover Town Hall**

Monday August 29, 2005

Present: Bill Bender, Henry Scheier, Irv Thomae, Athos Rassias, Paul Tierney, Cheryl Lindberg, Kari Asmus, John Hochreiter and John Chamberlin.

Chairman Athos Rassias called the meeting to order at 4:07 PM

Athos provided one handout headed Goals for the Dresden Finance Committee and Paul Tierney provided an additional handout titled Norwich Finance Committees Comments on Teachers Contract Negotiations.

Athos began the meeting with a statement that we should offer a focused opinion on the negotiations with teachers. Discussion followed Athos's lead in working through the handout that was developed by the sub-committee. Thoughts expressed around the table were that we (DFC) should support linkage of benefits and salary as total compensation.

Irv had a question on 2b that the rationale for the step and track structure "has been" rather than "is" as it describes how the process is now working.

Combining 2bi and 2bii into one sentence was also thought to be worth the effort.

Henry noted that in item 3 we (DFC) should go on record as in support of a concept of cost sharing. And that we define and again go on record as being in favor of Total Compensation being both Salary and Benefits.

Athos led a discussion on the advisability of inclusion of the last sentence in section 3c. His feeling that that sentence should probably be excluded.

Henry led a discussion on the problems of verbalizing a tie to Cost of Living. He expressed a sense that it (COL) is a dangerous concept. He noted that the basket of goods that is historically COL does not change as you step up the salary index.

Irv and Cheryl countered that there are some exceptions and can be worthwhile in particular terms of application.

General discussion followed that these recommendations need to apply to long range plans as well as immediate results.

John Chamberlin suggested that if we want the negotiators to introduce something, now is the time to tell them what we want.

John asked about the concept of performance reviews and its application against the step and track system. Discussion followed and Athos suggested that we include our (DFC) support for the concept of merit pay, in which some portion of an individual's salary increase, be based on performance evaluations.

Irv brought up some historic perspective in that the DFC would offer a hard percentage and solid basis for how we arrived at that number on the total increase allowable to the budget. There was limited feedback on the concept.

Kari noted that the School Board will meet tomorrow (August 30) and that time was of the essence.

Bill suggested that we recommend that anytime reference to the step and track schedule is effected that a corresponding schedule be appended showing the equalization of the contract numbers (based on a 180 day schedule) to a standard work force schedule (based on 2080 hours or a 260 days). He suggested that it was valid to compare teachers to our work years. Irv suggested that he was not sure that the proposal fairly stated the picture.

Athos returned to the Cost of Living and asked Henry for a statement of his original point. There was a lot of discussion but no defined conclusion only that both of them would work on it overnight and present it to the DFC in an e-mail.

Paul suggested that it is critical that the disparity between Hanover/Dresden and the next highest 10 districts needs to be reduced.

Athos lead general discussion on the proposal to waive tuition for staff. There was some consensus that if there was no cost it was not something that we might weigh in on. Then there followed some how thought no cost was an impossible suggestion. There were also some feelings that this was something that should if offered not be only for teachers. Generally it was felt that if the negotiators needed this chip it should be left to their discretion.

In regard to the document that we should share with the School Board and the negotiators Athos will present something on-line this evening or tomorrow. He asked that we all look at it carefully and offer a vote of confidence or not. We will vote electronically and someone will take a copy to the School Board Meeting tomorrow night. (August 30)

Note that there is an Open House at the Richmond School at 5:00 PM before the meeting.

Irv made a motion to adjourn at 5:38PM and the motion was seconded by Cheryl and voted unanimously.